

Can I put compostable food service products in my residential food and yard waste cart?

Several new products like cups, trays, and take-out boxes are marked 'compostable' or 'biodegradable'. However, only *some* of these products are accepted in Seattle's residential food and yard waste cart. Other products don't break down at our local composting facility, or aren't easily distinguishable, which is needed to help prevent contamination. Before you put compostable food service products in your residential food and yard waste cart— check this list¹ to see if they are accepted.

Note: Restaurants may have composting collection programs that accept food service products found at [Cedar Grove Composting](http://cedar-grove.com/SPU.asp) (<http://cedar-grove.com/SPU.asp>). Many of these commercially-accepted products are not allowed in your *residential* food and yard waste cart because they are not distinguishable from plastic or other contaminants.

These products are OK in your residential food and yard waste cart

Cedar Grove products: Look for the brown label or marking!



Deli and bakery wrap

Note: Plastic-like compostable products will not break down in a backyard composting bin.

Uncoated, food-soiled paper plates and bowls (such as Chinet brand)



¹ A number of manufacturers are developing new compostable products. As they are field-tested and accepted for composting by Cedar Grove and SPU, they will be added to this list.

These products should go in your residential recycling

Do not put these items in your food and yard waste.

Clean plastic deli and take-out containers and cups. Do not recycle products with a #7 PLA symbol.



Clean coated-paper containers, milk cartons, and cups



These products must go in your residential garbage

These products are not recyclable or compostable at this time.

- ✓ **Plastic-like items which claim to be compostable or biodegradable, but are not accepted by Cedar Grove and SPU for residential food and yard waste. Do NOT recycle corn-based plastic-like products.** Bio-based plastics contaminate regular plastic recycling.
- ✓ **Bagasse fiber trays.** Bagasse (sugar cane waste) has not broken down well in the composting system Seattle uses.
- ✓ **Food-soiled, coated-paper plates.** Most paper plates are plastic-coated (except Chinet and plain paper plates).
- ✓ **Utensils.** Utensils are not compostable or recyclable at this time, regardless of the material type.

Related Links

[Where to Buy Approved Compostable Bags](http://www.seattle.gov/util/Services/Yard/FoodYardWaste-ApartmentResidents/WheretobuyCompostableBags/index.htm)

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